

Summary of Major Themes from 01/25/2010 SRP Strategic Planning Webinar

The Webinar was held on January 25th from 2 to 4 PM EST. About 40 people registered for this second webinar. The participants represented three EPA regional offices, eight universities, four federal agencies, eight private companies, and a state, the Canadian Department of the Environment, and a non-profit organization.

The following is a summary of the major points raised during the webinar:

Questions 1 & 2. What scientific themes and issues are the most important to address in the SF Research Program and why?

What prioritization criteria should SRP use to guide inclusion of themes and issues in program activities?

What are the key teams and disciplines needed for the SRP to make the greatest advances in scientific themes and issues most important to the Program?

SRP should focus on emerging new chemicals (such as MTBE, other new chemicals coming into the market place – that may have been a TSCA new Chemicals

There is a need to address the uncertainties in conducting exposure assessments

Chemical Mixtures need to be addressed in research

There also is a need to conduct ecological research, using animal receptors and considering bioavailability of toxic substances

One commenter suggested focusing on vulnerable populations

Chemical mixtures are a big concern. There often are multiple contaminants that the receptors are exposed to.

Another commenter suggested focusing on a Life Cycle Mgmt approach to Toxic substances (especially large volume chemicals

Question 3. Given the interdisciplinary nature of the SRP, is the current framework the most effective approach? Why or why not?

Are there specific barriers to interdisciplinary research that SRP should know about? If so, how can SRP overcome these issues?

We too often ignore that research translation is a separate, and important discipline in science

Question 4. Given the interdisciplinary nature of the SRP, what approaches to training are most appropriate for the SRP?

It was suggested that including some time for SRP grad students to work in EPA Regional offices for a few months would be an excellent part of their interdisciplinary training

Rotations of graduate students in local health departments would also be an excellent part of the graduate training program

Question 5. Who should be SRP's stakeholders?

How can SRP most effectively interact with them?

SRP's interaction with its stakeholders should be interactive and allow for two way communication.

Question 6. What are the best ways for SRP to achieve its goals of research translation that is, making research more accessible by end-users?

It's good to "advertise" to the relevant audiences. For example, CluIn has a distribution of over 30,000 people in the general hazardous waste area.

Question 7. What are the appropriate goals for community outreach?

SRP should bring in social scientists into any site specific work – (EG Structured, formal meetings with EJ communities just don't work. Social scientists did very useful demographic analyses before public meetings that helped adapt the discussions to address their cultural based concerns. EPA successfully met with High School principals and in churches to gain a better communication process with the local communities.)

Another commenter provided an excellent listing of social scientists who can assist in the research translation/outreach process. This included urban planners, policy analysts, etc

Another commenter suggested focusing on non-SF sites such as Brownfield sites.

SRP should also consider the science needs at State sites